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Long-time Varina Resident and Public School Advocate Seeks Varina School Board Seat

Sandston, Virginia – John Montgomery announced today that he will be a candidate to represent Varina on the Henrico County School Board. Montgomery explained that he was entering the race because “Our children, parents and teachers deserve an active and persistent advocate at the School Board. I believe that public education is the bedrock of our democracy. A quality public education for our children insures that every person has an opportunity to pursue his or her full potential.”

Montgomery, as a graduate of public schools, has been active in supporting Varina schools for many years. He and his wife Carole served in a variety of PTA positions at his son’s elementary school, and John served two (2) years as PTA president. As PTA president John led an effort to place high-definition, close-circuit computer monitors in every classroom so that teachers and students had the latest tools to enable them to excel. Montgomery and the PTA took on this task when they learned that the renovations to the school were not slated until 2013. “This lengthy delay in at least upgrading our schools while new schools were being built in other parts of the County was unacceptable,” explained Montgomery.

In making his announcement, Montgomery identified three keys to the success of Henrico public schools: *First*, improve communication and interaction with parents and teachers at all grade levels. When elected as Varina’s school board member, John Montgomery pledges to meet with the staff and parents of each school at least once a semester. Also, John will call for the School Board immediately to begin broadcasting its meetings on Henrico Educational Access TV 99, so that more parents can participate in School Board business. When asked why he identifies these actions as priorities, Montgomery stated, “Openness by the Board is the first step to creating trust with parents and teachers.” *Second*, accelerate construction of a new high school in Varina. It is not acceptable to play “catch up” after our schools become over crowded. We know where the growth is coming, and we must take steps immediately to address these coming needs. According to Montgomery, “If the County can find millions of dollars to build a new little league stadium in Glen Allen, and purchase the Tuckahoe Little League ball fields, we can certainly find the money to build and improve schools in Varina.” *Third*, provide our teachers and administrators the support that they need to leverage 21st Century technology. It is not enough to have computers in classrooms and students’ backpacks. We must support our teachers as they work to maximize the use of technology in everyday learning.

Montgomery as a graduate of the Military Academy at West Point and an Army Veteran promises to bring a wealth of leadership and achievement to the Henrico School Board. Montgomery's military career included service as an Infantry Platoon Leader, Company Commander and Aide-de-camp to a senior Army General. His integrity and insightfulness were recognized when he was hand-selected to serve as an Inspector General for the Army National Guard.

Montgomery has continued to serve his community after leaving the military. Both Governors Mark Warner and Tim Kaine appointed him to positions of responsibility as a military advisor (aide-de-camp) and the Board of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries ("VDGIF"). At VDGIF, Montgomery was chosen by his fellow Board members to serve as Chair, leading the Department and Board through a difficult evaluation and reorganization effort. Montgomery's leadership was recently recognized by the Richmond Times-Dispatch noting that he, along with retired State Police Superintendent Gerald Massengill and others had helped restore the integrity and openness to the Agency.